

THE MODERN SCHOOLMAN

✿ ST. LOUIS UNIVERSITY ✿

VOL. 2

APRIL - 1926

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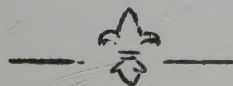
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Published on the 15th of each month, from October to May, by the Graduate School of Philosophy of St. Louis University. Address all communications to the Editor.

VOL.II

St. Louis University, April 15, 1926

NO. 7

A PENCHANT FOR EVIDENCE

It is not at all surprising to know that Du Bois-Reymond, and all those other enlightened sages of science who have gone his way, have met with insuperable difficulties in explaining Free Will. If one is in search of a pond-lily, we needn't call in an expert horticulturist to be assured that he will not find it by traveling to the Sahara desert and confining his investigations to those arid wastes. He might, however, come upon it in his own private garden, should he be sincerely bent on finding it.

Now we dwell in this privileged age to whose happy lot it has fallen to discover that "matter shall hold all the power". If anything at all is to be explained, it must be done in terms of 'matter'. Should the particular thing in question be of that stubborn nature as not to admit of such an explanation, let it be relegated to the riddle category. Free Will has been found to be most stubborn in this respect, and Free Will, in consequence, has been distinguished as the greatest of the seven world-riddles laid down by Du Bois-Reymond.

And, if one be blessed with that sanity which prompts him to take account of those patent facts which his own consciousness thrusts upon him, and, if in the light of this evidence, he refuses to regard Freedom as a riddle, then let him be prepared to hear the Materialist's last word: "You are laboring under a popular illusion". Popular, indeed, for so many seem to have been blessed with this sanity of giving consciousness a hearing.

But who with a spark of honor left for truth can stomach this nauseating morsel? Shall we be content to plead this blindness of those who will not see, and go the dismal way of the devotees of determinism, who

"Complacent fold their scarlet hands,
And heavenward roll their rheumy eyes

To thank the god, pound-penny wise,
Who freedom tied with iron bands;
Then bade his slaves work out their fate,
And choose, where chance is out of reach;
Predetermining beforehand each
To everlasting love or hate'!

With a penchant for evidence, we stand for the truth crystalized in that familiar adage that 'you can't fool all of the people all of the time'. Freedom has ever been mankind's unique boast. Poets have sung of it; orators have eulogized it; lives have been sacrificed in defence of it. And have all these been the sad victims of illusion? Have they all been deceived? Is Freedom after all but the 'dream of the falling sand'?

The universal and invincible testimony of consciousness has been that man's will is free. To call into question this testimony is equally absurd as to deny one's own existence, and leads to all the disastrous consequences of such a denial. If consciousness, the first source of knowledge, is capable of giving false evidence, then all human knowledge must go. If the intellect cannot discern truth from falsehood in the presence of objective evidence, then we must despair of ever arriving at the truth, whose ultimate criterion is precisely that of objective evidence.

Moreover, consciousness is nothing else but the testimony of present internal facts. Now self-determination is undoubtedly a present internal fact, and if consciousness is subject to illusion in testifying to this, there is no reason why it is not equally capable of error in testifying to other internal facts. And then the very foundation for sense-perception and reasoning are undermined, for sense-perception is a source of knowledge only when I am conscious that I perceive; and reasoning is possible only when I am conscious of the validity of the premises and their truth. It is clear, then, that the testimony of consciousness for freedom cannot be called into question without falling into the absurdity of absolute skepticism.

Let us close with the words of J. Elliot Ross, who has succeeded in putting the force of the experimental evidence for freedom so concisely. He says: "The consciousness of freedom is, indeed, so firmly rooted in normal human beings that they cannot rid themselves of the belief. Each of us has at hand in his own consciousness one of the strongest arguments in favor of free will. We all feel that we are free, and no specious reasoning has ever succeeded in really persuading us otherwise. We feel that we deliberately guide the course of our thought, that we exercise free volition in selecting one rather than another, that our will is the cause of the selection. Suppose for one moment that we are not free, but that there are beings gifted with free will; could their consciousness affirm their freedom any more clearly than our consciousness affirms ours? If we are not to reject all testimony of consciousness and become out-and-out skeptics, why refuse its evidence on this point?"

Richard A. Welfle, S.J.

OUIJA

A few weeks ago I had a conversation with my professor in Psychology. The professor told a story, for which he could vouch, of a young man who had become addicted to the use of the Ouija board and who in so using it had rendered himself useless for his work as a book-keeper. For whenever he would take up his pen to make an entry, the pen would automatically write the vilest and most vulgar things imaginable. "But", added my professor, "it is not necessary to go out of our way to find evidence of the dangers of Ouija board meddling." You can get first hand information at almost any insane asylum."

A topic of almost universal interest is here presented for consideration. Precisely in what does the harm of meddling with this "harmless toy", as it is so often styled, consist? The answer is simple. The harm consists in the abuse. The Ouija board is a laboratory device for Experimental Psychology. Its phenomena are purely natural. But it has been misused both in and out of Spiritism and its seances. The board, in itself, has nothing to do with Spiritism.

Let us look at this Ouija board, this mere laboratory device, with a view to finding out just where the danger lies in meddling with it. To begin, it may be well to consider a few devices preliminary to the Ouija board as it is generally known. The first of these devices, which probably originated in England, consists of a button suspended from a string, and a glass. The string should be so held that the button hangs in the glass at about its center. This device is supposed to tell the time by the button's striking against the sides of the glass. But the person who is holding the string must know the hour that is to be struck by the button. This contrivance is perfectly harmless, and may be used without danger. The explanation of its working is somewhat like that which applies to the second "preliminary". For this we can use the same button and string, held close to the surface of a board or table over the intersection of two lines drawn at right angles to each other. (A circular direction also is indicated.) The person holding the string must be determined not to move his hand, nor to give the string an impulse in any direction. He then imagines the movement of the suspended button in one direction or another. The button will begin to move with circular or oscillating motion, at first describing a small circumference, or amplitude, which rapidly increases in its proportions. Of course the limit of these descriptions is not indefinite. A simple explanation of this phenomenon lies in this, that the image of the movement aroused in the imagination of the experimenter causes a faint impulse in the efferent tracts which results in a movement in the fingers, so slight that it cannot be detected by the naked eye.

Thus far we have considered only harmless diversions which might serve to while away the time on a rainy afternoon. But in the case of the real Ouija board things are somewhat different. In the use of the former devices, the operator retains his dominion over his own actions, and the habitual guard over the wanderings of his mind. In the latter, i.e. the Ouija board, he voluntarily surrenders this dominion and guard, and so becomes a prey to all sorts of suggestions.

Is every person who meddles with the board, doing something that will result in serious injury to his mental or moral fibre; especially if the workings of the Ouija board are known to him? This may be open to discussion. But the mere meddling with this "plaything" can become so fascinating, that before long it may be difficult to say whether he has gone too far or not. We are by nature curious.

So it is a matter of little surprise that anything which savors of the occult has a double attraction, in these days when Spiritism, with its grain of truth and with all its nonsense and tricks, is followed by thousands.

It is to be noted that when a person comes to use a Ouija board, he usually begins with the board in its most detailed or complex form; that is, the ordinary smooth surface with the letters of the alphabet, the numbers, the words 'yes' and 'no' stamped on it. The heart-shaped planchette with three small legs padded at their bottoms with felt, will at first spell out the words and point out the responses which the experimenter wishes it to give, or which he is afraid that it will give. But beside this form, there are other forms in which casters are substituted for the legs of the planchette. A pencil sometimes takes the place of the front leg, or caster. This arrangement will write the messages instead of travelling from letter to letter. A still simpler form is a pencil placed in the hands of the subject, with which he automatically writes.

This is a sufficient description of the forms of the Ouija board. Let us now follow the progress of the havoc wrought in the nervous system and mental faculties of those who allow themselves to become addicted to its use. For convenience we shall divide this progression into three parts or stages. In the first stage the person is fully conscious of the operations of his mind and of the board.

In the second stage, the things which are written and the answers given are productions of the subconscious workings of the victim's mind. In this stage the writing is involuntary and subconscious, and when a person has reached this stage, he has already gone too far. He has deliberately allowed himself to become the victim of any suggestion, and in so doing, has cast aside one of the most precious gifts bestowed on him by his Creator, - the free control of his bodily actions through will power. The oftener he plays with the 'harmless toy', the easier the writing becomes. And finally he becomes entangled in the meshes which he has woven for himself. The result is unhappiness, grave injury to health, and in not a few cases, insanity.

We now advance to the third stage of the meddlers, - the stage in which the devil enters. But we must note before proceeding further, that we have no right to postulate the entrance of the evil spirit in these phenomena, unless all natural explanations fail to account for the facts. A bit of skepticism on this point would be a very good thing for those who are blind to the truths taught by the only source of supernatural truths on this earth, the Catholic Church, but who are ready to accept as certain the revelations of what they believe to be a spirit from the other world.

The conditions of persons in the second and third stages are similar to those of persons in hypnosis. After they awaken from their trance, they are sometimes surprised at the quality of the messages. Things which under ordinary circumstances would never have come to light, such as the most blasphemous and immoral utterances and rash judgments about one's neighbor, will under these conditions of mind be manifested. Then these persons are in their ordinary state of mind, they assert that this automatic writing is done under the influence of another person, under whose 'control' they are during the time of writing. This person is generally supposed to have lived long ages ago. Thus, a certain Mrs. --- claims to be controlled by "Patience Warth". These states of trance or hypnosis are due to the disordered imaginations of the persons who are subject to them.

But, how account for the fact that uneducated persons sometimes write things which show considerable mental training and acuteness? "Patience Wirth", (Mrs. ---), who is known to be uneducated, will write stories which call for no mean ability. In answer to the query, we may say that the subject must at some time or toher have heard the things which are written. A well-known example may be cited in confirmation of this. An untutored young woman in Germany was subject to hysteria. While in this state she would recite short snatches of Scripture in Latin, Greek and Hebrew. For some time this was baffling. Then it was discovered that in her earlier years, she had acted as the servant of a learned Protestant divine who was accustomed to walk back and forth near the kitchen window reciting passages from Scripture in the three languages mentioned. It was concluded that the snatches which the woman was wont to recite were those which had been spoken while her employer was within hearing distance.

In a few cases, where all natural explanations are insufficient, we may admit the entrance of a bad spibit. But simply "because certain phenomena are inexplicable, it does not follow that Satan is personally to blame". (Heredia, "Spiritism and Common Sense", C. I, p. 7.)

Beyond these few facts lie the labyrinths of Spiritism. But here we must stop. I think it must be evident to any thoughtful person that the Ouija board had better be left alone. We cannot learn future events through it, and the only result that meddling with it can have is a disturbed and unsettled state of mind, the logical end of which is insanity. But, if faith is put in the Ouija ad a means of finding out future events, this is a form of divination, and as such has been forbidden by the Church as a mortal sin against the First Commandment.

Louis E. Meyer, S.J.

A. NON-CATHOLIC OPINION ON SCHOLASTIC COMMON SENSE

"Does this line of reasoning mean that the Church trains her scholars to lean too heavily upon formal logic? By no means. She must ever insist that reason, although supreme in its own province, has limits beyond which it cannot rule. Take her reply to the intellectually fashionable sophistries of Kant. The old cob-web spinner of Koenigsburg was out to deny any definite proof of the existence of God. Therefore he insisted, and what he said was true enough as far as it went, that no man could logically demonstrate the existence of the external world. The Church's learned scholastics only smiled and answered: 'These things are too serious to be joked about. You, Herr Kant, are, like any other sane man, forced to assume that the external world exists. If in your heart you really denied it, the asylum doors would gape for you. Back in the twelfth century our predecessors had that matter out with the subtle Jewish disintegrator Maimonides!'"

— Hoffman Nickerson: "On Alliance with Rome"
(Commonweal 1:6)

HUME'S OBJECTION TO TESTIMONY

It was during the Novena of Grace this year. All week thousands had been coming to the Church of Saint Francis Xavier to lay at his shrine their various petitions for help. All week hundreds had been coming to lay at that shrine the thanksgiving of hearts that had not asked in vain. Among these were some of the more strikingly favored during the novena of last year- the aged woman whose sight had been restored, the medical expert whose asthmatic condition of fifteen years standing had been suddenly cleared up, and still others whose cases though scarcely less remarkable had been less scientifically investigated.

About a hundred feet from the shrine a students' study-club was assembled for its weekly meeting. A discussion was under way concerning David Hume's contention that miracles do not happen. He argues thus: "We know by experience the constancy and uniformity of Nature's laws, whereas the testimony of others has often turned out to be untrustworthy. It is more probable, then, that any number of men should be mistaken, or should conspire to deceive, in regard to a so-called miracle, than that Nature's laws should fail, or the order of the universe be violated."

In other words, if we were to have seen the blind woman being led into the Church and a little while later we had seen the same woman walking out at the side of her former guide, and had seen that all the while the brightness in her eyes was speaking of the joy and the cause of the joy that filled her heart, and if we were to have heard her words of thanksgiving and praise of God and His Saints as she stood outside the Church drinking in the beauties that had so long been denied her, it is more probable, if we are to believe Hume, that we, the witnesses of the miracle, should have been the victims of some hoax or delusion, rather than that the order of Nature should have thus been violated. Moreover if a whole churchfull of people, were to testify that such a thing had happened, we would have to reject their testimony.

Hume, however, is not warranted in rejecting the experience of others unless he can prove that the physical laws are absolutely immune from exceptions. Neither Hume nor anyone else can prove this. In fact Hume cannot prove even that there is such a thing as a physical law in the sense of any intrinsic necessity of constancy, since he rejects the principle of causality.

Neither may he reject the testimony of others regarding the occurrence of a miracle unless that testimony contradict his own experience of the same fact, at the same time and under the same circumstances. As it is there is no conflict between his experience and the testimony of others. He saw what happened ordinarily; they, what happened extraordinarily.

The discussion seemed to be almost over, when the presiding officer announced that he had a word to add and that the word of an authority. "Nor is it correct to describe a miracle as a violation of the Order of the Universe. He who gave Nature its laws cannot be said to violate them when He produces effects without them or beyond their reach. It were a strange Order of the Universe which would exclude the Creator from absolute control over His own world. Miracles are as much a part of God's Providence, and are to say the least, as indispensable to the Order of the Universe, as the ordinary laws of Nature."

A moment of silence followed to be broken by the striking of the clock in

the nearby tower. It was the hour for the next novena exercise. The meeting was adjourned.

Charles F. Kruger, S.J.

THE SEMINAR

Nearly a decade ago I heard a speech at an alumni banquet. In this speech a graduate of the 'Class of Ninety' told of the pleasure he got from picking up some of the authors he had studied, and how many of the associations of his college days came back to him as he poured over his Homer and Cicero.

Much the same has been our pleasure, the pleasure of us of the 'First Year Seminar'. Of course there has not been a generation in which our philosophy has been allowed to mellow and grow sweet, but — and I shall change my figure — the satisfaction of going over plowed ground and of smoothing out the little heaps and of breaking the lumps of knotty problems that always trouble the tyro, is full pay for the labor involved.

This happy result has been accomplished by the weekly meeting — during the Easter vacation we held several extra sessions — in which the matter of the previous term was reviewed and more thoroughly mastered. If the work of the seminar has done anything, it has accomplished this: we are convinced that Scholastic Philosophy can be more than a matter of subtle distinctions and idiomatic phrases. We know that it is a powerful instrument, capable of rescuing a blinded world from the pitfalls of materialism and the crags of idealism.

Joseph A. Foley, S. J.

THE BULLETIN BOARD

More than once of late comment has been made upon the manifestly increased spirit of philosophy that breathes about these age-stained halls of science. In a movement so general, it is not always so easy to point the finger at precisely just what it is that is responsible for the good effected. If, however, any factor is to be noted, that factor in our case is the live bulletin board hung in a conspicuous place in the recreation room. The credit for this work goes to Mr. Dowling. By dint of diligent and constant effort he has managed to keep the board alive with stimulating articles, clippings, fights, contriverseries, and whatever might have a philosophical bearing. Consistently to fill such a board is admittedly hard; to keep up keen interest in the same manner is deserving of honorable mention. The rest of the philosophers have derived no little benefit from Mr. Dowling's findings. Readers of the MODERN SCHOOLMAN can help this excellent work by sending in clippings or items of interesting philosophical contact.

R. L. M.

IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS: II. THE DOCTOR AND THE IMMORTAL SOUL

Doctor Robertson was true to his word. The clock in the church tower had scarcely struck the appointed hour when my bell was rung and I found him in the University parlor. After we had finished with the customary preliminaries, such as inquiries about the weather and the recent school tax vote, we were again ready to launch forth to peaceful battle.

"Doctor, I believe that we were to discuss the spirituality of the soul tonight. I think that is where we left off in our last discussion. You remember that you objected to my bringing in metabolism when I used intellectual memory for an argument for the existence of the soul, on the ground that the facts of metabolism were not always known. The thought occurred to me later that metabolism in some form or other must have been recognized from time immemorial. Of course the exact details were not always known; yet, at least the simple process of 'refection', the need of eating as a process of building up the wasted tissues, was always admitted."

"That is true, Father, but you said that you had other arguments."

"Yes; perhaps you still recall that I said something about essential difference between thoughts and mere sensations, the material operations of the body. Here is a good hook on which to hang a few practical thoughts, so let us start here. You admitted, Doctor, that we do have thoughts, didn't you?"

"So far I'm with you."

"Now will you go a step farther and admit that we often have intellectual knowledge of immaterial and universal things?"

"Proceed cautiously, Father, I have a rather vague notion of what you mean by immaterial and universal things."

"My mistake; however permit me to omit the long technical definitions of these terms and let me proceed at once to give you some practical examples. I merely wish to say that man is capable of generalizing or rising in thought above that which he can perceive with his senses. Man can get ideas of things which as such do not actually exist. Thus, for example, you can represent to yourself a triangle as such, obligation, justice, abstract, and so on. You never saw an abstraction as such, did you? Yet you know the meaning of that word. Neither you nor any one else ever realized by any one of the senses, you never saw nor felt, obligation; yet you know what obligation means. Doctor, I could go on giving you hundreds of similar examples, to show you that we do have knowledge of things which, although they have a foundation or basis in the order of nature, yet in themselves can in no way affect our senses."

"I suppose you want me to admit now that there is an essential difference between mere sensation and intellectual thought?"

"Not unless you are absolutely convinced."

"I cannot help admitting it from the examples you gave but it still seems

that our intellectual thoughts must in some way at least depend upon our sensations."

"Just so; but you are anticipating me a little. Let us clinch our other point first. You say that you see now that there is an unbridgeable difference between intellect of thought and sense or sensations. If that is the case, is it not reasonable to suppose that our intellectual operations should have a fitting subject or suitable home in which to reside, one which is peculiar to them, in something distinct from the material body and intrinsically independent of the body?"

"That seems to be good logic, Father."

"Alright then, suppose we call this fitting subject or home the spiritual soul. There can be nothing very wrong in the name, can there?"

"Father, I've come here with a head crammed full of objections and difficulties but you seem to have solved most of them as you proceeded along in your reasoning. Otherwise I might have exasperated you by my many foolish questions. But how about that --dependence of thought upon sensation?"

"Simply this. We know from our experience that our thoughts depend to a certain extent on this condition, that certain sensations at least frequently precede our intellectual operations. Our thoughts are bound up with and are accompanied by phantasms. From this we may rightly conclude that the human soul in its intellectual operations of thinking, extrinsically depends on the body."

"Well done, Father, you seem somehow or other to have paralyzed my tongue tonight."

"Doctor, on the contrary, I feel somewhat loquacious tonight. Permit me to epitomize a few of the deductions which we have drawn from our talk. Matter can not abstract and generalize, compare and contrast; man can. Hence man is more than matter. Even as you are listening to me, as I ramble on, you are doing your own thinking and as a result you may decide to do either this or that. Matter cannot estimate and decide; man can. Hence man is more than matter. That power in man which is more than matter we call spirit. The place where that spirit resides, if you care to speak that way, is the soul. No, Doctor, you need not fear to annihilate the soul whilst performing your operations on the material body."

"But how long, Father, will this soul continue to live? Will it die with the body? If it is the life-giving principle of the body, it seems to be common sense to say that when the body ceases to function, the soul must also necessarily cease to function."

"That is a good practical question; for on its solution depends the worthwhileness of leading a good life and of saving that soul. There is nothing like being practical. Do you believe in a just God, Doctor?"

"I suppose that I must believe that if I still wish to remain a Christian."

"But how can God be just when you know as well as I do that the good are not always rewarded here nor are the wicked always punished? Unless man lives on

after death God cares as much for those who are disloyal to Him as for those who are loyal. Unless man's soul is immortal, the Creator made wise laws and yet cares not whether or not they are observed. God would thus be stultifying Himself. The soul is spiritual; it has no parts; it cannot be divided. Hence it cannot be destroyed; it cannot perish. By its very nature it is postulated that God will preserve it; it is immortal. Moreover there is in each one of us something that tells us we shall not end forever. Every nation believes in a future state. This universal belief must have a foundation in nature."

"Thank you, Father, I am quite satisfied. There is one to find out how to make this undying life of the soul a happy one?"

"This question is answered completely only in theology and religion. We hold classes in religion two nights a week here for non-Catholics. Perhaps you could learn what you desire at these."

"I think I shall attend, Father. If I have an immortal soul, I guess it is up to me to save that soul."

"That is good sound reasoning, Doctor."

Ferdinand T. Keeven, S. J.

SEMINAR NOTES

First Year

Mr. Mahoney provided an interesting hour with his "Outline of Critical Logic." The outline is a large chart which attempts to correlate the various topics of epistemology by bringing out their relative importance and mutual independence. The outline was particularly successful in dissipating some of the clouds which always linger about universals and immediate judgements. In a future meeting Mr. Mallon, who has interested himself in the origins of epistemology as a separate science in the Scholastic system, will read his paper, "The Growth of Epistemology."

Second Year

The discussions in Psychology have given way to those in Cosmology. The first topic in this branch was the famous and ever interesting one of "Miracles." Mr. Dent and Mr. McCormack defended the possibility of the event of miracles and the possibility of recognizing them. Mr. W. Doyle and Mr. Cahill endeavored to disprove the defendants' claims.

Third Year

The next three meetings of this group will be devoted to a repetition of the theses in psychology which are assigned for the final examinations. Thus the

matter of first and second years will have been covered by the time that the usual repetition in class begins. Our outline of the course in philosophy is well under way. Criteriology, Ontology and Theodicy have already been outlined, and a synopsis of Cosmology is in preparation at present. It is planned to mimeograph these outlines for those who desire them. Suggestions from the members of other classes will be welcome.

EDITORIAL

THE AMERICAN CATHOLIC PHILOSOPHICAL ASSOCIATION

In our issue for May 1925, there appeared a copy of a letter which Reverend Dr. James H. Ryan of the Catholic University of America sent to 396 professors of philosophy and allied subjects, asking their judgement on the feasibility of starting a Catholic Philosophical Association. Encouraged by the response to this communication a tentative constitution was framed and mailed to the philosophy professors for consideration. Later plans for an organization meeting were drawn up, the program arranged and invitations sent out. The meeting was held January 5, 1926, at the Catholic University of America, Washington, D. C. And now we have in our possession the report of the proceedings of that "First Annual Meeting of the American Catholic Philosophical Association"; a long felt need has been realized.

American Scholastics can have nothing but praise for the work of those men who made this first nation-wide organization an accomplished fact. We have long felt the need of organization and centralization of our forces. We have been working independently; we have not been profiting by the findings of our fellow workers; we have been parochial. This association is the first great step in the breaking down of the barriers that have hedged us in and confined our activities — and our vision — to our own little seminary or college.

We also see in the American Catholic Philosophical Association a triumph for American Scholasticism. The opinion that Scholasticism has nothing to offer American thought and American problems has been so strong and so general that Scholastics themselves have been extremely timid and lacking in self-confidence. This organization tells us that we have "found ourselves" and as a body wish to present ourselves and our treasures before the whole country. Only prejudice and the unwillingness to give a hearing have been able to withstand our unity of doctrine and our unity of method. Can they withstand unity of attack and unity of organization also?

PHILOSOPHY DISPUTATIONS

The final disputations for the present scholastic year will be held on April 20. Mr. Gerald H. FitzGibbon will defend in Cosmology. Mr. C. Howard Morrison will defend in Ontology and Epistemology. Mr. Keeven and Mr. O'Brien will object in Cosmology; Mr. Dentinger, C. R. and Mr. Mallon, in Ontology and Epistemology.

B O O K R E V I E W S E C T I O N

God and Intelligence. Fulton J. Sheen, M. A., Ph. D. Longmans, Green and Co. London-New York. 1925.

'God and Intelligence' seeks to make St. Thomas functional, not for a school, but for a world. It succeeds because Dr. Sheen understands H. G. Wells, Dean Inge, Henri Bergson, William James, Ralph Barton Perry and John Dewey even better than the Angel of the Schools. Not that the Louvain scholar yields to any in his mastery of the 'Contra Gentiles', as his chapter on the 'Thomistic Answer to Modern Ideals' amply attests. But before uttering a syllable of dissect or critical appreciation, Dr. Sheen presents a vivid picture of that faith-state in which God is approached non-intellectually and yet is just as real as the "thrust of a sword or an embrace". The God-proved-by-reason-to-be-existent retires for the nonce and allows the God-I-feel-I-can-use to strut the stage as "President of the Great Cosmic Commonwealth". Yesterday He was exhibited as an Oriental monarch; to-morrow He may be nothing but a glorified Lenin. This the divinization of man and the humanization of God, who takes His color from the biological categories and the needs of the time. After a decent interval Dr. Sheen sets in contrast to this man made puppet the Supreme Being Aquin knew and loved and adored. This God is changeless because He is perfect and eternally active in the activity of His Divine perfection; not helpless with the helplessness of the indigent, but omnipotent with the richness of perfection; not "existing in solitary bliss", but complete with the perfect possession of the good and the true; not static in His nature, because active; not in process of development, because perfect; immutable, moving all things; eternally active, eternally in rest. Thus metaphysical and theological continuity far exceeds biological continuity. Perhaps there is a transfer of empirical principles, a lyricism of science which only craves a more cautious application. Dr. Sheen discusses this and kindred problems with a felicity of style which compels attention. It will be a glad day in the battle for Truth when her other champions appear beside him in shining armor against a host of brilliant adversaries.

J. F. T.

Essentials of Formal Logic. Michael J. Mahony, S. J. The Encyclopedia Press. 1918.

Taking Father Mahony at his word that his book will "comprise the essentials of the subject and serve as a basis for further development and illustration in the hands of an experienced teacher," you will find his promise quite fulfilled. Given the elaborations and illustrations that the teacher will supply, you can take Father Mahony's book in hand and "salt away" Minor Logic economically and intelligently. The form of presentation, i.e., the varieties of type, the spacing, the 'emphasized page' (if I may coin a phrase to express the idea of a page which speaks to you and does not make you puzzle over it) are commendable points in the book. Only they are not carried far enough. The effect of the whole is nearly ruined by the blurred ink; and the pages give an unnecessary impression of being crowded simply because the paragraphs are crowded quite too close one against the other.

Minor Logic itself has always seemed to me a sort of glorified 'Dewey' system applied to the mind and its processes. You must generally begin in puzzled

haziness to learn Minor Logic; you may end in despair. For Minor Logic was evolved by the keenest and most subtle minds of old. They deliberately set themselves the task of splitting up and tagging all the paraphernalia they might find in the stock room of the mind. But, as one perforce must learn Minor Logic, I would be content that he do so in Father Mahony's little book, always supposing an instructor to drive home and clarify the splendidly succinct little summary.

R. B. Morrison, S. J.

BOOKS RECEIVED

The following books will be reviewed in a succeeding issue:

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY--

New Realism in the Light of Scholasticism. Sr. M. Verda.
Elements of Ethics. C. C. Milner, C. S. C.
Logic Deductive and Inductive. Thos. Crumley, C. S. C.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS--

Karl Marx's Capital. A. B. Lindsay.
Our Minds and Their Bodies. John Laird.

METHUEN AND COMPANY--

Elements of Greek Philosophy. R. B. Appleton.

BENZIGER BROTHERS--

The Mind. John X. Pyne, S. J.

E. P. DUTTON--

Thrasymachus. C. E. M. Joad.
